

The Guide's Forecast - volume 12 issue number 35

**Northwest Oregon and Washington's most complete and accurate fishing forecast**

Forecasting for the fishing week of **August 27<sup>th</sup> – September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010**

**Oregon Fisheries Update:**

**Willamette Valley/Metro-** Effort is ramping up for anchor anglers pursuing upriver bright chinook from Longview to Portland. Anglers typically target deep running salmon in 30 to 45 foot of water along the shipping channel edges. Fishing is most productive on outgoing tide but anglers need to be aware of ship traffic when anchoring in the channel. Catch rates will ramp up significantly this week with a peak likely in the next two weeks. Bonneville Dam counts are climbing rapidly but anglers typically don't produce good catches until October when more local stocks of Chinook are available.

Steelheading has been productive between Eugene and Springfield on the upper Willamette on days when there has been some cloud cover and temperatures have remained moderate.

Caddis patterns are productive on the upper McKenzie with dries effective in the afternoon.

Steelheading will be best higher up on the North Santiam where water temperatures remain cooler.

The Sandy mouth is getting some traffic but success rates for chinook remain low. Fishing remains poor in the river. Coho will be entering soon.

The occasional steelhead is being taken high on the Clackamas. Coho are a few weeks away.

**Northwest –** The Buoy 10 fishery is peaking right now. Both chinook and coho are being caught throughout the tide with the exception of the middle 3 hours of outgoing tide. Fresh herring and spinners are both taking fish with spinners working best close to high slack and after. Chinook fishing is slated to close on August 31<sup>st</sup> but will remain open above Tongue Point. Coho are beginning to make a stronger showing in the estuary and will be a primary focus by September 1<sup>st</sup>. **Call Great White Bait** in Hammond or Chinook for your fresh and frozen bait needs. They have some of the best bait in town! **(503) 861-0299** and mention this ad on **The Guide's Forecast!**

The ocean out of the mouth of the Columbia is still producing salmon but native coho seem to make up the bulk of the catch. Effort is waning with the strong prospects in the lower Columbia but September can offer up some nice days with larger "B" run coho still available well into September.

Albacore tuna fishing is picking up for anglers willing to travel up to 40 miles west of the Columbia River mouth. This fishery should be peaking in the next several weeks. Live bait and jigging will begin to produce the best results. Friendly seas are in the forecast.

River crabbing should get good later next week with favorable tides beginning on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Ocean crabbing remains open and should improve as well.

Interest will be growing for north coast chinook in the coming weeks but with such a strong showing of chinook on the mainstem Columbia, anglers will focus their efforts there. Tillamook Bay is forecast to be above average this year with some quality fish likely due back early next month. Target lower bay salmon on the weak tides and fish the upper reaches on bigger tide exchanges.

The Nestucca and Nehalem Basins are open but a below average return is in the forecast. Fair numbers of hatchery coho will likely begin to show on the Nehalem system but anglers are reminded there is no wild coho retention this year on any north coast stream.

Tuna fishing is also an option out of Garibaldi with reports of good action about 40 miles to the west. Drop your crab pots when heading out as quality males are making their way closer to the shoreline.

**Southwest** – Coho catches picked up over the past weekend, which saved the day for many boats as warm water moved too far offshore for tuna fishing.

Trolling for chinook has been good in the lower Umpqua around Reedsport. Early mornings have been best. Catches will improve into September. Limits of Dungeness are being taken just outside of the north jetty.

Ocean crabbing is excellent out of Charleston and boaters have landed some large ling cod recently as pots soak. Tuna fishing has been good at times.

While there have been plenty of chinook in Rogue Bay, trollers and moochers have been unable to crack the code over the past week with only a handful landed. Rockfishing has been very good offshore, however. Gold Ray Dam is gone.

Boats launching out of Brookings took decent-sized ling cod and rockfish into the teens. In addition, ocean fishing has improved for coho and chinook. Tuna fishing has been slow, requiring a round trip of 100 miles or more.

**Eastern** – Due to strong runs, the upper Snake River will open for fall chinook harvest on September 1st for the first time in many years. Two hatchery fish will be allowed per day from the Oregon-Washington border to the deadline below Hells Canyon Dam through October 31st. Chinook must be a minimum of 24 inches and only barbless hooks are allowed.

Fires have been hampering angling efforts on the Deschutes. Steelhead are being caught with crowds thinning on weekdays.

Green Peter is still producing kokanee with better catches in the arms as spawning season approaches.

**SW Washington** – District streams are beginning to get their first coho returns back to the hatchery. Although a large portion of coho return to these systems in October, opportunity will exist on several tributaries in the coming weeks.

Check local listings for recently changed fall chinook regulations. Additional protections are now in place for sensitive wild stocks of chinook.

Steelhead are available on several systems but anglers will turn their focus to salmon. Drano Lake remains a strong option for steelhead even though dam counts are beginning to wane at Bonneville. Fall chinook will become available near the river mouths in the coming weeks.

The White Salmon and Klickitat Rivers should produce both salmon and steelhead near the river respective river mouths in the coming weeks.

**Columbia River Fishing Report** – It's clearly peak season on the lower Columbia. Although anglers will agree that it's hot one day and off the next, catch rates back up the fact that there are a lot of fish in the lower Columbia River right now. Some of the best fishing has taken place in recent days with a stronger showing of coho in the river right now. Chinook can still make up a fair portion of your catch however.

Most recently, the tides have favored afternoon opportunity with high tide coming about mid-afternoon. The best action in this fishery has traditionally been the last 2 hours of incoming tide along with the first 1.5 hours of outgoing. On Wednesday however, there was a good bite close to the Desdemona Light marker on the Washington side with a lot of coho in the catch. Some Chinook were also caught with numerous fish in the 20-pound range. The previous day, a great upstream troll on the early part of the incoming tide yielded both Chinook and coho close to the bottom. Then, following the rest of the standard pattern of above the bridge on the Washington side, then over to the Oregon side for the first part of outgoing tide also produced results.

Chinook have been showing in all stages of the tide but coho have certainly made a stronger showing in the recent week. Coho are starting to dominate the catch and are becoming quite receptive to hardware. The standard red/white or pink spinners have been taking fish, especially coho but several people are also using hoochies in conjunction with their spinners. I have been using bait on at least 4 of my 6 rods fishing and they are responsible for the bulk of my bites. Conversely, some guides have gone to exclusively spinners and are willing to drop their bait orders altogether. Can anyone figure that out?

One of the more consistent bites for the week has been fishing the 30 foot line on the Oregon side at high slack and the first few hours of outgoing tide. That will fade into the night right now and will soon come back in the early morning.

Fewer larger fish are now showing in the catch and although a rumor of a 61-pounder is floating around, it "floats around" every season. I won't give much credence to it. Chinook are still averaging between 12 and 22 pounds with a fair number of tule Chinook still showing up on the end of my rods.

We'll give more detail on where to fish next week in The Guide's Forecast section below as the bite has not been all that consistent this season in terms of what area to fish. Thankfully however, the Chinook are still biting in the Buoy 10 fishery!

With the river wide open right now, not many anglers are heading west to the ocean these days. Most recent reports indicate a high incidence of coho present and anglers still needing to run pretty far SW to get into a consistent bite. There was some decent fishing last week between Buoy's 3 and 1 (green line) with a fair number of Chinook in the catch. That bite along with any semblance of a bite off of Long Beach is but a distant memory now. The ocean coho quota and Chinook guideline never really got close to being achieved and that's not likely to change anytime soon.

Tuna anglers have been having quite a time for nice sized albacore out of the mouth of the Columbia. In calm seas, it's good traveling weather and the fish have been quite receptive to jigs and live bait. Productive numbers from a recent report are: 46 10 x 124 50, 45-50 X 124-45 and 46 04 x 124 46.

Ocean crabbing has been productive too although more keepers have been reported from more southerly ports. River crabbing is a good option if you have fresh bait and the tide series is soft. With the best fishing in the river, there isn't much crabbing (or fishing) effort outside these days.

Upriver, anchor anglers are beginning to hit more consistent numbers of fish using wobblers to entice strikes. Boaters working the Portland to Longview stretch are starting to see fair numbers of fish caught with the peak season just a week or so away. Check the detail of regulation in your area before heading out as new regulations come about every season to protect sensitive runs of Chinook, particularly lower river wild stocks, mostly bound for SW Washington rivers. This fishery will be peaking in the next few weeks with numbers of Chinook crossing Bonneville improving daily.

Steelhead counts have fallen in recent days and will continue to dwindle with the exception of another bump of "B" run fish coming through in the coming weeks. These fish can be intercepted by anchor anglers using spinners attempting to catch salmon. They can range in size from 10 to 20 pounds.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Buoy 10 will remain the main focus of most anglers this coming weekend. With great fishing for both Chinook and coho and a higher influx of a higher quality upriver bright Chinook likely, this should be a good weekend for making memories. Coho will continue to make up the bulk of the catch and anglers may want to re-focus their efforts on this specie if you're going for the more "sure" thing.

You'll still be playing the tides, focusing on high tide which will soon change to the early morning hours. Although there has been some good bites on the very last part of outgoing tide, the early morning high will produce some phenomenal catches this upcoming week. Anglers will want to focus their efforts near the bridge on either the Washington or Oregon side. Both should produce well but until you get a high tide a little later in the morning, you may want to keep your focus on the Oregon side as that has been producing the better results on the early part of the outgoing tide.

More guides are switching their tactics to spinners but I'll be sticking with fresh herring or anchovies in the coming weeks. Bait is still king for me but spinners are responsible for a few fish each day in my fish box. The standard red/white or pinks and oranges continue to produce the best results. Hoochie spinners seem to be popular right now as well.

Target 30 foot of water although anglers are also consistently catching fish in 20 to 28 feet of water as well with a few folks even trying 40 foot. Keep your gear fishing close to the bottom but if you have enough rods to experiment with, reel one or two rods about 4 cranks off of the bottom. Those rods have been popping off with some regularity as well.

As the tide goes out, anglers should be fishing lower in the system. Stay as close to the colder ocean water for as long as possible but fishing downstream of Chinook or Buoy 14 may be a waste of time until more extreme tides come back around in early September.

Crabbing in the lower estuary may be worthwhile when the tide series lets up but with all the traffic around, buoy lines are likely to get cut by running boats or angry anglers that tangle when trolling. Pot thieves are not out of the question either.

The ocean remains an option, but why? You'll likely have better luck in the river. A combination salmon or tuna trip with crabbing may make it interesting however. Check the above section for productive tuna coordinates. It's peak season for albacore right now. Live bait or jigs will work quite nicely this time of year although trollers are still reporting taking a few fish.

Wobbler fishers should be coming into their season pretty good this week. Target upriver brights upstream of Longview near the channel edges, targeting water between 35 and 45 feet deep. The outgoing tide, particularly the first 2 hours and the last 45 minutes should produce the best

results. Although it may be premature to expect easy limits, the days of 4 to 8 opportunities are likely not far away.

**Willamette, McKenzie & Santiam Rivers Fishing Report** – The first coho were counted crossing Willamette Falls earlier this month. When the number ramps up into fall, tributaries will be productive at the mouths and upstream.

McKenzie water levels have dropped slightly this week but remain eminently fishable with water temps remaining in the low to mid 50-degree range.

Santiam water levels remains stable but optimum fishing temperatures will be high on the system in summer weather. The Santiam system closed for Chinook August 15th.

**The Guide's Forecast** – With additional release from Hills Creek Dam, there's plenty of water in the Middle Fork Willamette which, when combined with outstanding run numbers this season, is providing steelhead opportunities now.

Steelheading remains worthwhile on the McKenzie and once springers start to spawn in the next couple of weeks, fishing below the redds will become the most effective technique. Trout anglers must put forth a little extra effort this time of year but there are fish to be caught.

The North Santiam has a decent population of summer steelhead available but they haven't been anxious to bite. Try a bobber and jig as that combo has been most effective here.

**Clackamas and Sandy River Fishing Reports** – Water at the Clackamas is at summer level lows and very gradually dropping in warm, dry weather. Anglers are anxious for coho to show, particularly in light of early catches last season but it looks like it will be a few weeks for this fishery to get underway.

The Sandy River remains in as poor a water condition as at any time during the year with milky, glacial runoff causing turbidity.

**The Guide's Forecast** – Fish the Clackamas for steelhead at first light or not at all. Results for those who have done so have been fair to good. Once the brightly-colored plastic inflatables hit the water, it's over.

Only the most hardcore anglers will be on the Sandy now. It would be best to wait for the temperature to drop, a little rainfall and the coho to show in catchable numbers.

**North Coast Fishing Report** – Anglers can look to Tillamook Bay for an early Chinook and some should be present. Trask River bound Chinook should be entering the system and the weak tide series coming up later in the week may prove productive for lower bay anglers. Herring fishing near the bar will produce the best results during these times.

As we've mentioned before, the Nestucca and Nehalem systems are expecting poor returns this season although fish have been confirmed recently from Nehalem Bay. It's not unheard of to get fish in the Nestucca this early as well. Just don't expect great results.

Although we don't have any confirmed reports, hatchery coho should be entering both the Nehalem and Tillamook systems. Both will likely be getting fair runs at best as it's quite common to get mediocre returns after a good coho production year.

Crabbing is improving in the ocean along the north coast. Estuary crabbing should also be improving and the weak tide series coming up near the end of the month should prove productive as well. Effort will remain on the Columbia giving these other areas a reprieve before fall crowds hit.

**The Guide's Forecast** – If you're one to avoid crowds, this is the place for you. Troll spinners or herring in upper Tillamook Bay if you want a fair chance at an early and large Chinook. Some coho should also be available.

With so few people fishing the area, success can be equivalent to peak season effort without the pressure. If you choose to target early season Chinook, do fish the bar of Tillamook Bay and any open estuary for that matter, as we near the low tide exchange towards the end of this month.

Do bring your crab pots. Whether you're crabbing inside or outside, success rates should be on the increase.

**Central & South Coast Reports** – Ocean coho has continued to show improvement with the greatest effort and highest catch per angler out of Newport. About 64% of the offshore coho quota remains available to anglers. Catches drop off in the ocean to the south.

Albacore results have been fair to good with most boats returning with fish. A 20 to 30 mile offshore trek has been required out of Depoe Bay and Newport.

Crabbing has been good in bays and estuaries with quality showing some improvement. Ocean results have been very good just outside in 50 to 80 feet of water.

Wild coho may be retained on the Siletz and Coquille rivers through the month of September due to a large return this season. A quota of 400 for the Siletz with one wild fish allowed for the season and 200 for the Coquille with one per day and five for the season will be allowed. In addition, Tenmile opens October 31st through the end of the year or a quota of 500 fish for wild coho with one allowed per day and five for the season. Siltcoos and Tahkenitch will also allow native coho retention but in all cases, only one rod may be used during this fishery.

While results have been spotty for many, the lower Umpqua is producing multiple Chinook hookups to those with the right technique applied in the right place and results have been improving. Marshfield Channel has been putting out fish. Bank-bound anglers are throwing spinners to pick up the occasional Chinook. Coho have yet to enter in significant numbers but a few hatchery fish have been bagged. South Jetty fishers are taking decent numbers of rockfish and surf perch. Steelhead are being taken early mornings on the North Umpqua. South Umpqua anglers are catching good numbers of smallmouth with surface offerings effective early and late in the day. Be aware of a toxic algae advisory for the Canyonville stretch.

Chinook are starting to nose into the Coquille system although catches have been light. Coos anglers are picking up Chinook at the river mouth.

Trollers in the Rogue estuary continue to be frustrated by the good number of early fall Chinook in the bay which are unwilling to bite. Best results have come late in the day, however. A productive alternative might be to target half-pounders which are abundant in the lower Rogue

below Agness. Despite roiled water from the Gold Ray Dam removal site, Chinook catches have been steady on the middle Rogue with plugs most effective. Anglers in the upper Rogue are taking a mix of fall Chinook and summer steelhead. Chinook are most likely to hit plugs on the stretch from the old Gold Ray Dam site up to Dodge Bridge. Summers are less selective, taking a variety of lures and bait. This will be the last weekend for bait and hardware anglers to ply the upper Rogue as it becomes flies-only water as of September 1st. This restriction remains in place through October.

**Central and Eastern Oregon** – Steelheading has been worthwhile and showing improvement on the lower Deschutes with hookups occurring from the mouth up to Shearars Falls. Dark-colored lures and flies are most effective. Trout fishing is fair to good, best in the afternoon when dries are occasionally effective. Caddis patterns are predominate.

Green Peter continues to pump out decent catches of kokanee on the downrigger troll but time is running out on this fishery as the fish will be hitting tributaries to spawn soon. The Thistle Creek area remains productive.

**Washington fishing reports:**

*From the WDF&W Weekender Report for August 2010*

**August 2010**

**Contact: (Fish) 360-902-2700**

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**Buoy 10 Columbia salmon season highlights a great month of fishing**

Anglers are reeling in chinook salmon off the coast, pulling up pots full of crab in Puget Sound, and casting for trout in alpine lakes on both sides of the Cascades. Summer fisheries are in full swing, and anglers can look forward to even more great fishing opportunities in the days ahead. A prime example is the Buoy 10 salmon fishery, which opens Aug. 1 at the mouth of the Columbia River. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected to return to the big river this year, and fishery managers predict that anglers will catch approximately 12,500 of them between Buoy 10 and Rocky Point, 16 miles upriver.

"Buoy 10 is a very popular fishery, drawing tens of thousands of anglers every year," said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Fishing tends to start out slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

The chinook fishery closes Aug. 31 at Buoy 10, but anglers can continue to keep hatchery-reared coho salmon in that area through the end of the year. Upriver from Rocky Point, fishing opportunities for both species continue late into the year on the mainstem Columbia River and many of its tributaries.

Rather crack some crab? Fisheries for Dungeness crab are open throughout August in most areas of Puget Sound - the exception being Marine Area 7-North near the Canadian border, which

opens Aug. 11. Specific regulations for each area are described in WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet and on the department's website (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/>).

### **North Puget Sound**

Anglers are reeling in chinook and coho in Puget Sound, where crabbing is still an option and two additional marine areas open for salmon Aug. 1. Meanwhile, anglers are having some success at Baker Lake, which recently opened for sockeye salmon.

For the first time, anglers are fishing for **sockeye salmon** in Baker Lake, where the fish are returning in significantly higher numbers this year. Anglers fishing Baker Lake can retain up to two adult sockeye salmon that exceed 18 inches in length from Baker Dam upstream to the mouth of the Baker River. All other salmon must be released, and no fishing is allowed between the dam and the log boom at the lower end of the lake.

"The fish are biting, it's just a matter of finding them," said Brett Barkdull, fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "Most anglers have done well once they get over them, and hopefully that will continue into August."

The sockeye salmon fishery at Baker Lake is open until further notice, said Barkdull, who reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations>. Separate sockeye salmon fisheries on portions of the Skagit and Baker rivers run through July 31.

Elsewhere, anglers can still find some **steelhead** along the Reiter Ponds section of the Skykomish River. But most freshwater anglers are gearing up for Sept. 1, when the Stllaguamish, Snohomish, Skykomish and portions of the Skagit, Snoqualmie and Green (Duwamish) rivers open for salmon fishing.

Beginning Aug. 16, **Lake Sammamish** will also be an option for freshwater salmon anglers, who will have a daily limit of four salmon, and can retain up to two **chinook**. All sockeye must be released, and fishing is closed within 100 yards of the mouth of Issaquah Creek.

On Puget Sound, anglers can fish for salmon in marine areas 7 (San Juan Islands), 9 (Admiralty Inlet) and 10 (Seattle/Bremerton). Those fishing Marine Area 7 can keep one chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild coho and chum starting Aug. 1.

Anglers fishing marine areas 9 and 10 can keep hatchery chinook - marked with a clipped adipose fin - as part of a two-salmon daily limit, but must release wild chinook. Those fishing Marine Area 9 also must release chum salmon, while anglers in Marine Area 10 are required to release chum beginning Aug. 1.

The chinook selective fisheries in marine areas 9 and 10 run through Aug. 31. Beginning Sept. 1, anglers in those two marine areas will be required to release all chinook and chum. Anglers are reminded that regulations vary for inner Elliott Bay, Sinclair Inlet and public fishing piers in those marine areas.

August brings other opportunities in the region to catch and keep salmon. Beginning Aug. 1, marine areas 8-1 (Deception Pass, Hope Island and Skagit Bay) and 8-2 (Port Susan and Port Gardner) open for salmon. Anglers fishing those two areas will have a daily limit of two salmon but must release chinook.

Meanwhile, the **crab** fishery is under way in Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 (South Puget Sound) are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 (Tacoma/Vashon) and 12 (Hood Canal) are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website ( <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/> ) for more information.

### **South Sound/Olympic Peninsula**

Summer salmon fishing is in full swing along the coast, where anglers are hooking some bright chinook and nice-size coho. "Some days are better than others, but for the most part fishing has been good for both **chinook** and **coho** ," said Doug Milward, ocean salmon manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). "In the coming weeks, I expect fishing to get even better as more salmon show up and the weather settles down."

Anglers fishing marine areas 1 (Ilwaco), 2 (Westport-Ocean Shores), 3 (LaPush) and 4 (Neah Bay) can keep up to two chinook as part of their two-salmon daily limit, but must release any chinook measuring less than 24 inches and hatchery coho less than 16 inches. Wild coho must be released unharmed. All four ocean marine areas are open to salmon fishing seven days a week. Salmon fishing is scheduled to continue through Sept. 18 in marine areas 3 and 4, through Sept. 19 in Marine Area 2 and through Sept. 30 in Marine Area 1. However, salmon fisheries in those areas could close early if catch quotas are reached. Milward reminds anglers to check for any rule changes at WDFW's website at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations> .

So far this year, angler effort has been lower than expected likely because of rough weather, Milward said. "Conditions should improve as we move into August, making it easier for anglers to get out on the water," he said.

In the Strait of Juan de Fuca, anglers are still having some success hooking chinook and the occasional coho in marine areas 5 (Sekiu) and 6 (eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca), while salmon fisheries in marine areas 11 (Tacoma/Vashon), 12 (Hood Canal) and 13 (South Puget Sound) continue to be slow.

Because salmon fishing rules vary depending on the marine area, anglers should check the *Sportfishing Rules Pamphlet* (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>) before heading out on the water.

Anglers still hoping to land a big flatfish should be aware that the late season for **halibut** opens Aug. 6 in Marine Area 1. The fishery is open three days per week (Friday through Sunday) until the quota is taken or Sept 26, whichever occurs first. A total of 4,885 pounds of halibut are available for harvest, including 854 pounds left over from the early season.

Prefer shellfish? The **Dungeness crab** fishery is going strong in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and most areas of Puget Sound. Dungeness and red rock crab seasons are:

- Marine areas 4 (east of the Bonilla-Tatoosh line), 5 (Sekiu) and 13 are open through Jan. 2, seven days a week.
- Marine areas 6, 8-1, 8-2, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are open Wednesday through Saturday through Sept. 6, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine areas 7 South and East are open through Sept. 30, Wednesday through Saturday, and the entire Labor Day weekend.
- Marine Area 7 North will open Aug. 11 on a Wednesday-through-Saturday schedule through Sept. 30, and open the entire Labor Day weekend.

The daily catch limit in Puget Sound is five Dungeness crab, males only, in hard-shell condition with a minimum carapace width of 6¼ inches. Fishers may catch six red rock crab of either sex per day, provided those crab measure at least 5 inches across. See WDFW's sport-crabbing website ( <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/shelfish/crab/> ) for more information.

Meanwhile, WDFW enforcement officers will be increasing resource-protection patrols on the **Skokomish River** , where recreational salmon fishing opens Aug. 1 under several new regulations.

The daily bag limit has been increased this year from one to two salmon for anglers fishing from the mouth of the river to the Highway 101 Bridge through Sept. 30. However, a new rule in effect this year requires anglers to carefully release any wild chinook salmon they catch. As in previous years, anglers must release chum salmon through Oct. 15.

Another change this year is that recreational fishing will be closed from the Highway 106 Bridge upstream to the Highway 101 Bridge on six Mondays to avoid potential gear conflicts with treaty tribal fishers. Those closures are scheduled for Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and Sept. 13. Recreational fishing downstream of the Highway 106 Bridge will remain open seven days a week through the fishing season.

Anglers fishing the Skokomish River also will be required to release any salmon not hooked inside the mouth and retain the first two legal salmon they catch. In addition, single-point barbless hooks are required and a night closure and anti-snagging rule will be in effect.

### **Southwest Washington**

For Columbia River anglers, this month provides a great opportunity for a triple play. Fishing seasons for fall chinook salmon and hatchery coho open Aug. 1, while summer steelhead are expected to continue providing good fishing well into September.

While the **fall chinook** season opens upriver to Priest Rapids Dam, most of this month's action takes place in the popular Buoy 10 fishery on the lower 16 miles of the river. A big run of 664,900 fall chinook is expected this year, setting the stage for some good fishing, said Joe Hymer, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

"The fall chinook fishery is looking very promising this year," Hymer said. "Fishing tends to start slow, then accelerates quickly and builds through the rest of August."

So will the catch. Fishery managers estimate that anglers will catch 12,500 chinook salmon by Aug. 31, when the retention fishery for chinook closes in the Buoy 10 area. They also anticipate a catch of 12,000 coho in that area and another 17,000 chinook between Rocky Point and Bonneville Dam by the time those seasons come to a close.

Bank anglers planning to fish at Buoy 10 should be aware that access to much of the North Jetty will be closed, due to a major project being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reinforce beaches eroded by winter storms. "The North jetty provides the only real bank access to that fishery, so things could get a little crowded," Hymer said.

For the Buoy 10 fishery, the daily limit is two salmon, two **hatchery steelhead**, or one of each. However, anglers may retain only one chinook salmon (minimum size, 24 inches) per day as part of their daily limit. Only those steelhead and coho marked with a missing adipose fin and a healed scar may be retained. This requirement does not, however, apply to fall chinook, which may be retained whether marked or unmarked.

For more rules on the Buoy 10 area and other waters upriver, see WDFW's *Fishing in Washington* pamphlet, which is posted online at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/>.

By mid-to-late August, the bulk of the chinook run historically begins to move upstream while increasing numbers of **coho** move into the Columbia River behind them. For anglers following the chinook upriver, Hymer recommends fishing deep, between 40 and 50 feet down. For a lure, he suggests a wobbler anchored with a heavy weight.

"Chinook go deep when water temperatures are high - as they are now - so that's a good place to find them," Hymer said. "At the same time, anglers should take care not to drop anchor in the shipping channel. That can lead to real trouble."

While 2010 is not expected to be a banner year for hatchery coho, those fish will help to round out anglers' daily limits at Buoy 10, Hymer said. WDFW currently expects about 290,000 coho to return this year, down significantly from last year's exceptionally large run of three-quarters of a million fish.

"While we will likely see fewer coho this year, those fish will still make a real contribution to the fishery," Hymer said. "They usually bite best at Buoy 10 on herring and spinners, and then later in the tributaries."

Meanwhile, plenty of **hatchery steelhead** are still available for harvest, Hymer said. In June, anglers caught more early-run summer steelhead than at any time since the 1970s, and those fish should keep biting hooks through mid-August. By then, the larger "B-run" steelhead - many weighing in the teens - should start arriving to pick up the slack. This year's return of "B-run" steelhead, most headed for hatcheries on the Clearwater and Salmon rivers, is expected to total about 100,000 fish, about double the size of last year's run.

"The combination of three species - fall chinook, coho and steelhead - makes August a great time to fish the Columbia River," Hymer said.

They'll also liven up fishing in the tributaries, where anglers have been reeling in respectable numbers of hatchery steelhead for the past few months. As on the mainstem Columbia, the fall salmon season starts Aug. 1 on a number of area tributaries, although salmon fishing doesn't really take off until September. Meanwhile, Drano Lake and the White Salmon River are good places to try for steelhead looking for cooler waters.

Like last year, anglers will again be able to retain up to six hatchery adult coho on all tributaries to the lower Columbia River with hatchery programs. Those rivers include the Cowlitz, Deep, Elochoman, Grays (including West Fork), Kalama, Klickitat, Lewis (including North Fork), Toutle (including Green and North Fork) and Washougal. Also like last year, hatchery fall chinook are the only kind of salmon anglers can retain on the Grays, Elochoman and Kalama rivers.

Some new rules will also be in effect, including a requirement that anglers release all unmarked chinook (adults and jacks) on the Cowlitz, Toutle, Green, Washougal, Wind and White Salmon rivers, plus Drano Lake. Last year, that requirement applied only to jack salmon on those rivers. As always, WDFW strongly advises anglers to check the *Fishing in Washington* rules pamphlet for new rules applicable to specific waters before leaving home.

Of course, salmon and steelhead aren't the only fish available for harvest in August. **Walleye** fishing has been good in the Columbia River near Camas, as well as in The Dalles and John Day Pools. **Bass** fishing has also been heating up from Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam.

For **trout**, the high wilderness lakes around Mount Adams and Mount St. Helens offer unparalleled fishing experiences for those willing to brave the mosquitoes. Riffe Lake in Lewis County is still giving up some nice landlocked coho, while Mayfield Lake, Skate Creek and the Tilton River are still receiving regular plants of rainbows. Hatchery sea-run cutthroats should also provide some opportunity on the lower Cowlitz beginning in late August.

### **Eastern Washington**

With water temperatures rising, the month of August is usually best for warmwater-species fishing throughout the region.

Chris Donley, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist, said mixed-species waters are a good bet. **Yellow perch, largemouth** and **smallmouth bass**, and **crappie** can usually be caught at Coffeepot Lake in Lincoln County, Downs and Chapman lakes in southwest Spokane County, Newman and Liberty lakes in eastern Spokane County, Eloika Lake in north Spokane County, and the Spokane River reservoir of Long Lake and Deer and Waitts lakes in Stevens County.

Fishing at **rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout lakes near Spokane - like Amber, Badger, Clear, Fish, Williams, and West Medical lakes - is best early in the morning or at night, Donley says. The lower Spokane River has nice rainbows and browns, but river anglers need to be aware of catch limits, gear restrictions, and other rules listed in the fishing pamphlet.

**Catfish** and **sturgeon** fishing is usually productive in the Snake River system in the southeast part of the region in August. Catfish are often landed in the backwaters and sloughs throughout the mainstem Snake, as well as in or near the mouths of tributaries like the Tucannon River.

Sturgeon fishers are reminded of the minimum 43-inch and maximum 54-inch tail fork length and the daily catch limit of one sturgeon. The Snake and its tributaries upstream of Lower Granite Dam are catch-and-release only for sturgeon. The section of the Snake just east of the Tri-Cities, from the mouth to Ice Harbor Dam, is also catch-and-release for sturgeon starting Aug. 1.

Fishing has slowed considerably for **rainbow trout** in the small man-made lakes off the Tucannon River on WDFW's Wooten Wildlife Area in Columbia County, said area manager Kari Dingman. With or without good fishing, lots of folks like to escape city heat with a weekend camping trip to the area. Dingman said hot and dry conditions, along with a recent wildfire, have resulted in a ban on campfires.

Dingman also reminds fishers and other recreationists that a U.S. Forest Service road, bridge and culvert over the Little Tucannon River are under re-construction for the first half of August, so state campgrounds Panjab North and South, along with the Sheep Creek and Meadow Creek trailheads, will be inaccessible during the project.

In the north end of the region, **kokanee** and **walleye** fishing continues to be good at Lake Roosevelt, the Columbia River reservoir off Grand Coulee Dam. Kokanee fishing is also productive at Stevens County's Loon Lake during night time hours.

Some of the high elevation lakes on U.S. Forest Service property in the northeast district that are stocked with **rainbow** and **cutthroat trout** may be good destinations for camping and fishing weekends. In Ferry County, try Davis, Ellen, Empire, Swan and Trout lakes. In Stevens County, try Gillette, Heritage, Sherry, Summit, and Thomas lakes. In Pend Oreille County, try Carl's, Cook's, Frater, Halfmoon, Leo, Mystic, Nile, No-Name, Petit, South and North Skookums, and Yokum lakes. More information on these mostly small fishing lakes can be found in WDFW's 2010 Fishing Prospects at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>.

Anglers are reminded to be extra careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. Current wildfire conditions in Washington are available at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

### **Northcentral Washington**

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Bob Jateff of Twisp reports that **salmon** fishing in the mainstem Columbia River is picking up with the approach of August. "An increasing number of **sockeye salmon** are being caught right off the mouth of the Okanogan River," Jateff said. "**Chinook salmon** fishing has been slow, but should pick up as more fish pass Wells Dam."

Jateff reminds anglers the daily catch limit is six salmon, of which no more than three can be chinook, and only one chinook can be a wild, unmarked fish.

The action should also pick up on the Methow River and its tributaries, now that stream flows are finally dropping to fishable levels, he said, noting that those waters are catch-and-release only and that selective gear is required. He advises anglers to check the sportfishing rules pamphlet to be sure which areas are open to fishing.

"Smaller tributaries within the Methow system are good during the summer for anglers who want to catch and keep **brook trout**," Jateff said. "Eightmile, Falls, and Boulder creeks are all tributaries to the Chewuch River that hold brook trout. The daily limit on Falls and Eightmile Creeks is five fish, and on Boulder Creek it's 10 fish. There is no minimum size for brook trout in these waters."

Jateff says lake fishing throughout the Okanogan district generally slows down during the hotter months, except for waters at high elevation. "Alpine lake fishing action picks up as the trails become more accessible," he said. "Most high country lakes either have reproducing populations of trout or are sustained by periodic fish plants. **Cutthroat trout** is the main species in a lot of these waters."

Jateff noted that anglers who fish deep during the cooler parts of the day - very early or late - can catch some nice **rainbow trout** in the lower elevation waters, too. "Wannacut Lake near Oroville, for example, is a deep lake that seems to hold up well over the summer," he said. Anglers can find specific information about fishing waters throughout the region, county by county, in WDFW's Fishing Prospects report at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/prospects/>. Wherever of where they go, anglers are reminded to be careful with anything that could start wildfires in the region's hot and dry conditions. Outing plans should include a check on campfire restrictions on public lands. See Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fire

information by county at <http://fortress.wa.gov/dnr/firedanger/BurnRisk.aspx>. See current wildfire conditions in Washington from the National Interagency Fire Center at <http://www.inciweb.org/state/49/>.

### **Southcentral Washington**

Fishing for **kokanee** at Rimrock Reservoir - the 2500-plus-acre impoundment on the Tieton River along Hwy. 12 about 10 miles east of White Pass in western Yakima County - is about as good as it gets these days. That's the word from both Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) district fish biologist Eric Anderson and WDFW regional habitat program manager Perry Harvester, both of Yakima.

"You can catch your daily limit of 16 fish in just a few hours of fishing," said Harvester. "Use small, white, shoepeg corn or maggots soaked in tuna or shrimp oil at about 20 feet deep on a wedding ring spinner behind a smaller gang troll, like small cowbells. Two ounces of weight are all that is needed. Troll very slowly, between one and two miles per hour. Vary your speed and make turns once you find a school. There's good action for kids to keep their attention. There's less wind to contend with at the west end of the lake but the fish are everywhere."

Anderson reports the kokanee, or "silver trout," which are actually land-locked sockeye salmon, run about nine to 10½ inches long. Rimrock anglers are hitting them hard these days. "With the hot weather continuing," Anderson said, "you may have to go deeper than the 20 feet where Perry caught them, maybe down to 30 feet."

Anderson also recommends kokanee fishing at other Yakima Basin reservoirs including Bumping, and Keechelus and Kachess in Kittitas County. "All these waters are closed to the taking of any **bull trout**," Anderson said, "so anglers need to release all inadvertently caught bull trout." Water levels in streams in the upper Yakima and Naches river systems are in pretty good condition for **wild rainbow** and **cutthroat** trout fishing, Anderson said. Anglers should check the stream regulations for details and release all **salmon**, **bull trout**, and **steelhead**.

"The mountain country has really opened up now and there are some great high lake trout fishing opportunities in the South Cascades," Anderson said. "There are lots of small lakes to hike up to that we stock with fish."

Specific information on stocking Yakima and Kittitas county alpine lakes can be found at [http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3\\_highlakes.htm](http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/plants/regions/reg3/r3_highlakes.htm).

Rather catch **walleye**? Creel reports show that interest in walleye fishing is picking up on Lake Umatilla, the Columbia River reservoir behind McNary Dam on the Washington-Oregon border. Creel checkers were actually looking for salmon and steelhead anglers, but 102 anglers out of 129 interviewed were fishing for walleye.

"Those anglers averaged about one walleye for a little over four hours of fishing each," said WDFW fish biologist Paul Hoffarth of Pasco. "We tallied 128 walleye total, 89 kept, 29 released." There is no minimum size on Columbia River walleye, but only five fish of the 10-fish daily limit can be over 18 inches and only one over 24 inches can be retained. Anglers targeting walleye also caught **smallmouth bass**, Hoffarth reported. Four bass anglers interviewed averaged about one fish per hour of fishing. There is no minimum size on bass, but only three fish of the five-fish daily limit can exceed 15 inches.

**Sturgeon** fishing is catch-and-release only Aug. 1 throughout the Columbia River. The section that has been closed to all sturgeon fishing, from the Interstate 82 bridge upstream to McNary Dam, opens for catch-and-release only Aug. 1.

Hoffarth's most recent sturgeon fishing checks showed anglers averaging one sturgeon for over six hours of fishing. Most were less than the 43-inch minimum, with a few in the slot limit of 43 to 54 inches, and a few over the 54 inch maximum.

### **TGF Inbox - Reader E-mail**

Got a question, story to tell or information to share? Shoot us an Email!

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### **Random Links**

Deschutes fire & closure info:

<http://inciweb.org/incident/2075/>

NOAA BookletCharts™ for the Pacific Coast - print 'em off at home:

<http://ocsdata.ncd.noaa.gov/BookletChart/PacificCoastBookletCharts.htm>

More maps and info:

[http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/library/library.shtml#Willamette River Recreation Guide](http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/library/library.shtml#Willamette_River_Recreation_Guide)

Nautical Charts:

<http://xpda.com/nauticalcharts/>

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**GOOD LUCK!**